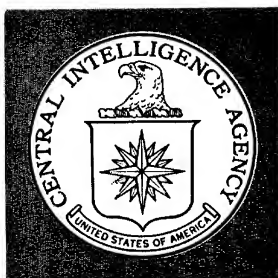


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CIA/SAVA /WVIND 710918



WEEKLY VIETNAM INDICATORS

Week Ending 18 September 1971

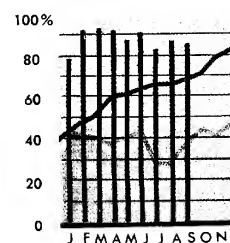
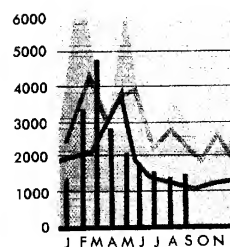
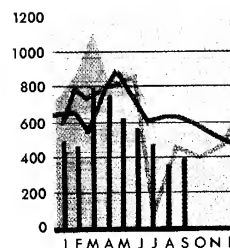
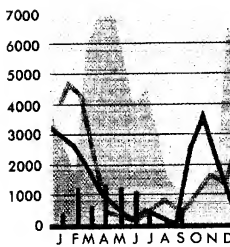
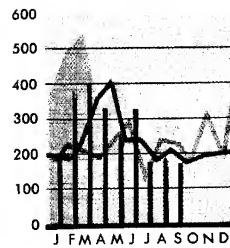
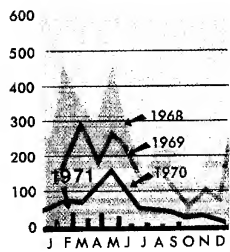
NSA Declassification/Release instructions on File.

For the President Only

~~*Top Secret*~~

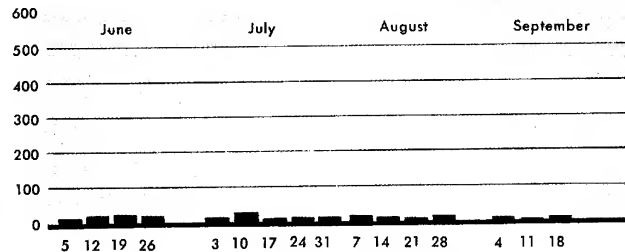
SOUTH VIETNAM WEEKLY INDICATORS

1968-1971
Weekly average for each month



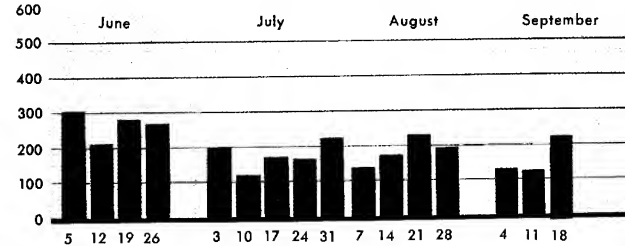
JUNE 1971 - SEPTEMBER 1971
Weekly data as reported

US BATTLE DEATHS



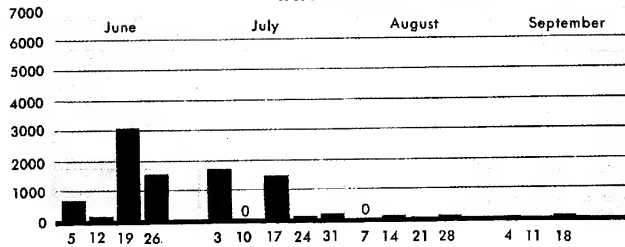
increased to 13 from the 12 of last week.

SOUTH VIETNAMESE BATTLE DEATHS



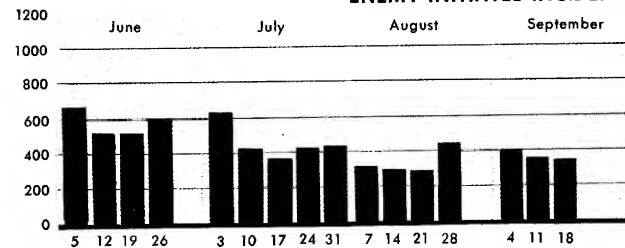
increased sharply to 288 from last week's 135. The official total will change as late reports are received and will be lower than the figures released to the press by the GVN.

INFILTRATORS DETECTED IN PIPELINE



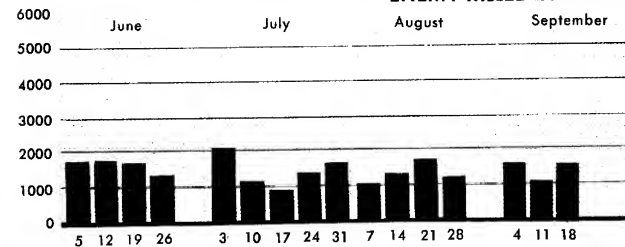
consisted of four special purpose groups with 103 personnel. The infiltration estimate since 1 October 1970 is now some 75,800-77,300.

ENEMY-INITIATED INCIDENTS



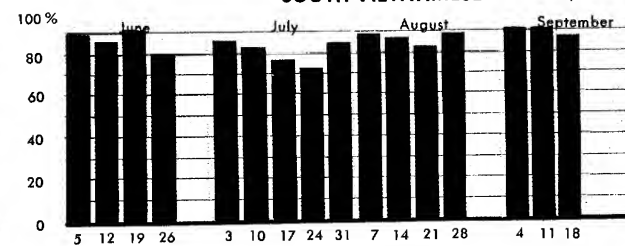
declined to 366 from last week's 382.

ENEMY KILLED IN ACTION



increased sharply to 1,527 from the 1,070 of last week.

SOUTH VIETNAMESE EFFECTIVENESS



as measured by the percentage of enemy killed by GVN forces dropped to 84%.

Statistics for the latest week shown are preliminary

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Enemy Activity

Fighting was at reduced levels throughout South Vietnam during the past week. LAM SON 810, the South Vietnamese division-size operation in northwest Quang Tri Province, terminated this weekend. Altogether, there was very little contact with the enemy. Several sizable caches were uncovered, however, which may put a crimp in any near term Communist plans for intensified activity in this area. Several sharp clashes have occurred in the U Minh Forest of MR 4, but these have been generally the result of enemy reaction to stepped-up ARVN operations rather than enemy initiatives. Present indicators suggest that the current overall level and pattern of activity is likely to continue relatively unchanged for the short term. Nonetheless, reports still continue to be received of the movement of Communist units in MR 3 in anticipation of a political crisis in Saigon which they hope to be able to aggravate and exploit by military action.

Friendly forces in Laos maintained the initiative on all fronts over the past week with three new operations underway in the north: one designed to deny the enemy the use of the area northeast of the Royal Capital of Luang Prabang, another to expand friendly holdings in Sayaboury Province, west of Luang Prabang, and a third to obtain high points overlooking the northern edge of the Plain of Jars. Friendly forces were within 500 meters of the latter objective before being turned back by an NVA force on 19 September. In the south, a new assault to clear enemy forces from the Muong Phalane area was begun on 19 September. On the Bolovens Plateau, government troops have turned to defending Paksong (recaptured on 15 September) and clearing the hills to the north of the town. Enemy counterattacks began immediately after friendly forces secured the Paksong airstrip, and additional government reinforcements have been flown in to aid in consolidating the area. Also in south Laos, the flow of ralliers picked up again when some 85 came in on 13 September adding to the 200 or so over the past two months -- 700 for the year. The U.S. Mission is urging the Lao Government to adopt a number of programs to handle the estimated total of 1,500 to 2,000 ralliers expected by the end of the year.

There was a slight increase in military activity in Cambodia during the week, particularly against forces involved in CHENLA II, the FANK operation along Route 6, and in the Bos Khnor area northwest of Phnom Penh. Cambodian forces committed to CHENLA II reportedly may soon attempt to push on to Kompong Thom. The ESSO and Shell company's fuel storage facilities on the northern outskirts of Phnom Penh sustained extensive damage during an attack by the Communists over the weekend. These are the largest petroleum storage facilities in central Cambodia and the loss of the storage capability will mean a decrease in deliveries to civilian POL users in the Phnom Penh area. The Communists are increasing the pressure on Siem Reap. The Siem Reap Airfield received its third attack by fire of the week on 19 September, but there is, as yet, no sign of any impending large-scale ground attack by the Communists.

Enemy Infiltration

The lull in personnel infiltration is apparently continuing with only four small, special purpose groups detected during the week. The infiltration estimate of personnel moving toward South Vietnam-Cambodia since 1 October 1970, thus, stands at some 75,800 - 76,300. While truck movements have also remained at the low rainy season level, preparations for the dry season logistics push are continuing in the southern provinces of North Vietnam despite the temporary disruptions caused by the recent flooding. Moreover, road repair and maintenance of storage facilities in the Lao Panhandle are receiving the majority of the Communist's efforts as preparations for the coming season continue there.

South Vietnam Developments

Following more than a year of relative calm, South Vietnam's political scene is now characterized by small-scale but mounting disorders in several of the major cities. Although President Thieu's election policy has provided the incentive for the agitation, the students, veterans, and some militant Buddhists are using the occasion

to further their traditional demands upon the government. Vice President Ky, who has been encouraging the students and veterans, is trying to gain the cooperation of General Minh and his staff in plans for a joint campaign aimed at forcing postponement of the 3 October referendum and eventually ousting the president. The An Quang Buddhists are disinclined to engage in demonstrations officially, but have issued a statement strongly critical of Thieu and in effect calling for a boycott of the referendum. Thus, there is considerable potential for serious political discord. If tensions continue to increase, the risk of some single rash act, such as an assassination attempt, will also increase, as will the risk of some intrinsically minor incident's ballooning in importance by happening at the wrong time or being initially handled the wrong way. Thieu should be able to remain in control unless he loses the unified backing of the army, which he still enjoys. The army, in turn, will probably continue to support Thieu unless key generals come to believe that the impact of South Vietnamese developments in the U.S. may jeopardize the continuation of U.S. aid.

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